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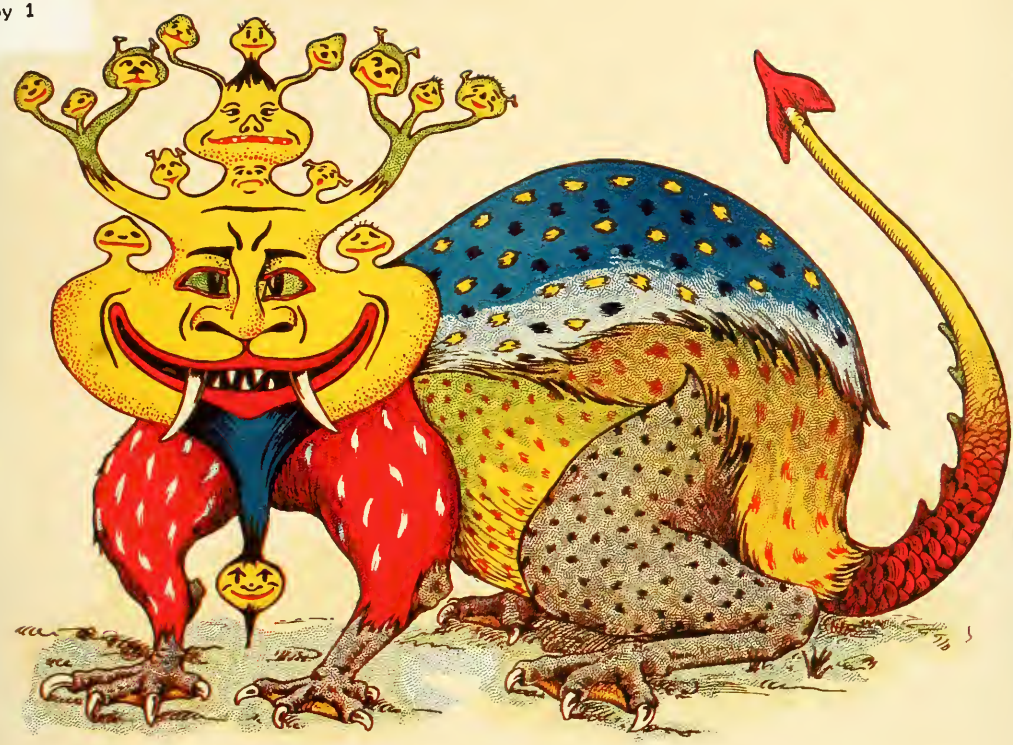

THE WOOLERWEE

and other Hoosier Poems

BY HOOSIER PITT

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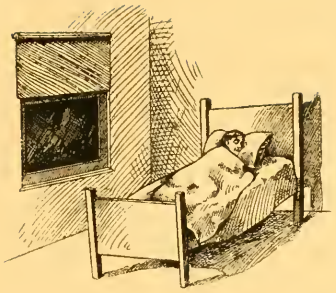


Did you ever hear tell of the Woolerwee?
He lives on the banks of the River See;
He kills all the fish with his fetid breath,
And scares little boys and girls to death.

He's got seventeen heads and a horney tail,
And his voice is a creepy screaching wail;
He's red and yellow and blue and green,
And every color you have ever seen.

When the night is dark and you've gone to bed,
And snuggeled down close and covered your head
And don't moove a bit nor draw your breath
For fear the Woolerwee will scare you to death.

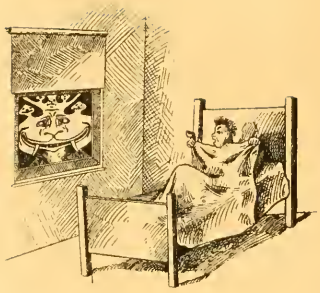
He comes creeping out of his slimey den,
And goes prowling around your house and then
He'l scream and moan and wail and weep,
Cos he cant find any children that aint asleep.

Then you snuggle down tight and I bet you'r glad
That you aint done anything very bad,
Then the first thing you know it's morning again
And the Woolerwee's gone back to his den.

Once I saw the Woolerwee,
A Lookin through the window at me;
His seventeen heads were all covered with blood,
And he'd a got me then if I hadent been good.

The smoke was coming out of his eyes and nose,
And sparks of fire flying off of his toes;
But I pretended like I was fast asleep,
And shut my eyes and I could hear him weep.

Then he danced a jig on the end of his tail,
And let out a screeching shivering wail;
And then I hollered with all my might,
And opened my eyes and it was broad daylight.



I saw the Woolerwee last night,
An I saw him plain; cause the moon was bright.
He was settin out under our apple tree,
But you bet I diddent let him see me;

Cause I haddent been very good that day,
Mother wouldent let me go an play
Down in the creek where I wanted to wade
Cause she said thats where the Woolerwee staid.

So I kept as quiet as I could be
And peeked through the winder where he couldent see,
Cause I knew he'd get me if he knew I had
Been cross with mother an very bad;

One head was awake; I could hear it weep;
But the other sixteen were fast asleep.
He was wailing and moaning, and swaying his head,
An dident know there was a little boy that wasent in bed;

Then his heads woke up, an he made a screeching nois,
An I knew he was going out looking for boys
That hadent been good, or wasent in bed,
So I run an jumped in an covered my head.

An then this morning when twas broad daylight,
I told mother what I'd seen last night,
An she said I hadent been very bad,
Cause the Woolerwee'd got me if I had.

An she told me if boys were good,
The Woolerwee would'nt get them if he could;
But if boys were as bad as they could bee,
They'd better be scared of the Woolerwee.

But I aint going to be bad again;
Nor be cross with mother, or cry; an then
If he comes prowlen around fer me,
He'll find I aint afraid of the Woolerwee.

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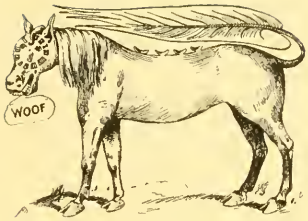


The Hee-Haw Horse

By Hoosier Pitt

Did you ever see a Hee-Haw Horse?
He has a cloven hoof.
He neither whinners, neighs, or brays;
All he can say is "Woof."

He has a pleasant open face,
Like our old coo-coo clock,
And right between his ears there grows,
A cunning curly lock.

His tail grows long and spreads out wide,
Just like the palm leaves grow,
And curls right up above his back,
To shed the rain and snow.

He is not savage in the least;
He wouldent kill a mouse;
He'd make a lovely pet for you,
To have around the house.

I bet that you are planning now
To get one for a pet;
But I havent told you where he lives;
That is, I havent yet.

I'll tell you though, if you will draw
Your chairs up to the hearth,
Where you can find this wonder horse,
And just what he is worth.

He's not for folks to use to haul,
Their stone and brick and sand,
For he is just a fairy horse,
And lives in fairy land.

To see this wonder fairy horse,
You have to be so good,
You couldent do a thing that's bad;
And wouldent if you could.

When you have done your very best,
To do every thing your told,
And havent done a thing all day;
To make your mother scold.

If it is in the summer;
When the nights are nice and warm,
And the big full moon is shining,
And there is no sign of storm.

Then you get up just at midnight,
And creep softly down the stairs,
And slip out in the garden,
And catch the fairies unawares.

And there you'l see the Hee-Haw Horse;
For he's the fairies steed;
You'l always find him with them;
To fill their every need.

And if you make a bit of nois,
They'l hop upon his back,
And he takes them back to fairy land,
Faster than any hack.

This wonder horse can not be bought;
For tons and tons of gold;
For in the land where fairies live,
There's nothing ever sold.

And now I've told you every thing,
About this horse I know,
And if you want to see him,
You know just where to go.

The Old Coal Oil Light

By Hoosier Pitt

Old memories cling around me like a halo round a saint;
Though the faces of my comrades, with time are growing faint,
There's one memory always with me and shining clear and bright,
When we gathered round the hearthstone in the chilly winters night.

There was mother with her darning, and father with his pipe,
And all my sisters knitting; round the old coal oil light.
Then, some neighbors, maybe three or four, would drop in for a chat,
And the conversation drifted to gosts and such as that.

And then we kids would pull our chairs close up where it was light,
Listening with beating hearts and almost dead with fright.
Then hickory nuts, and walnuts, and apples were brought,
And in the joy of feasting, gost stories were forgot,

But only to come back again with all the fear and dread,
Of climing up those dark old stairs and tumbling into bed
While gostly eyes were peering round each corner of the beds,
We'd snuggle down among the clothes and cover up our heads.

I can see my father telling, and hear his voice a'most,
Of the awful wooly giant—of a North Carolina gost;
How he grew from just a midget to forty feet in hight,
Then stooped and groaned and straightened and jumped with all his might.

Straight up and up this giant went, and over trees he flew,
And if he touched the ground again, my father never knew.
And I could see that giant gost when creeping up the stairs,
And scared almost to death for fear he'd take me unawares.

Some people think 'twas foolish and some a downright crime;
To tell the children stories like they did in olden time,
But I hold that memory sacred, and recall it with delight;
When the family circle gathered round the old coal oil light.

OLD MEMORIES

By Hoosier Pitt

Oh, the olden golden harvest, in the crispy time of fall,
When the corn is ripe and yellow and you hear the black birds call,
When the farmer's busy husking, and filling up his mows,
To the whinner of the horses and the lowing of the cows.

Then the hickory nuts are falling and it's music to the ear
Of the denizens of Boyville in the crispy time o' year,
And the autumn leaves are falling, slowly drifting to the ground,
And the hazel nuts are turning to a golden russet brown.

Swimmen' holes are then forgotten; bats and balls are laid away,
For it's good old 'hickory nutten' in the golden autumn day.
Take me back oh, sacred memory and gently set me down
In my boyhood's happy playground round that dear old Hoosier town.

MARGIE and MARILLA JANE

By Hoosier Pitt

I liked Margie a whole lot better
'An I did Marilla Jane,
Cos Marilla Jane she fussed with me,
Every time she came.

But Margie never fussed at all;
She was as good as she could be;
Course I got mad at her some times,
But she never got mad at me.

An whenever I got mad at her
I sent her right straight home;
But when I wanted her back again,
She was always glad to come.

But Marilla Jane she'd talk so fast
I did'en know what she'd say;
An then she'd always want to fuss;
She dident know how to play.

If Margie'd only moove back here
I'd not get mad any more;
You bet I wish I heard her now
Knocken on our door.

If Margie dont moove back again
I don't know what I'll do;
Unless I moove to her house,
I gues that's the best, dont' you?

COLORED SPOTS

By Hoosier Pitt

On de bank ob de pon sets de ole bullfrog;
De chipmonk he setten on a rail;
Raccoon setten on a holler log,
Counten de rings on his tail.

Web foot duck come trompen up de road;
De lizzerd go a scooten through de grass;
Behin de stump jump de ole warty toad,
To let de ole duck git pass.

De niggers am sleepin in de shade ob de woods
Hiden from de wo'k on de fa'm;
De cows am lollen an chawen da cuds
In de shade ob de white folks ba'n.

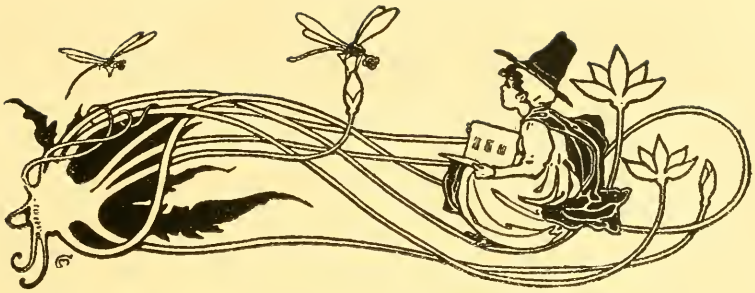
De possum am peekin froo de crack ob de fence,
Watchen de little niggers play;
Cotten tail rabbit jes waiten fer a chance,
To take a peek when de possum go away.

Ole mammy settin a dozin in de sun;
Long side de ole cabin do,
Waiten an a longen fer de good time to come,
When she dont got to wo'k no mo.

A BLACK CRIME

Black bird setten on a willow lim,
Talken to his wife,
Little nigger come along wid a ta'get gun
An took dat black bird's life.

Was'nt dat an awful crime
To do a fing like dat?
For bof ob dem two critters
Was as black as my ole hat.



OVERFLOW

By Hoosier Pitt

Spring's a comin I can smell it; floatin through the air;
Grass an flowers is sproutin up, almost everywhere.

Nearly warm enough fer swimmin, tried it out today;
Jes a littel bit too chilly; to go in to stay.

Heard a medder lark a singin; over in the wood,
Dident kill the littel feller, wouldent if I could.

Cause I know he likes to live, jest as well as me;
An if I ever find his nest, I''ll jest let it be.

Feel so glad that I'm a livin' I dont want to hurt a thing;
Like to see the birds an insects, floatin round upon the wing.

Spring's a comin, I can smell it, see the signs of summer too,
An I can't begin to tell you, all the things I'm goin to do.

Goin to try an be as sunny as a sunny summers day,
Jes a lookin fer the blessins, that's a goin to come my way.

An when the summer sunshine's over, an the frost of winter's here,
I will try an fill the winter, jest as full of summer cheer.

Mother's callin, I can hear her; bet she wants some wood;
When a feller's got to work, he don't feel so good.

THE BOYVILL LODGE

By Hoosier Pitt

When the leaves are turning, golden, and the frost is in the air,
And the small boy's out a scoutin for the rabbit in his lair,
And a cleanen up his rusty skates, discarded in the spring,
While his thoughts are gaily soaring; like a bird upon the wing.
Getting all his things together for the good old winter times,
When old Santa comes a rompen, with his reindeer and his chimes.
And watching for the snowflakes; that tells him winter's here,
Bringing color to his rosy cheeks, and tingle to his ear.
Then its pure joy unloyed; that leaps into his heart,
Exclusively for boyhood; no grownups may take part.
No password, grip or countersign, will pass you through the door,
That leads to happy Boyvill; and all its sacred lore.
I'd give up all ambition, and hopes of future gain,
For the privilege of joining the Boyvill lodge again.

FUTURE PROSPECTS

By Hoosier Pitt

Do you know what I'm a goin to do,
When I grow up as big as you?
I'm goin to be a outlaw an rob a train
An make a fortune an a famious name.

I'll be the greatest outlaw that ever was
An I'll do every thing that outlaws does.
I'll go out west and have a hidden den,
An be the chief of more'n a hundred men.

An I'll rob the banks where they keep the gold,
An give it to people that are sick an old.
Caus maybe they'd starve if it wasent for me
An that's why I'm goin to be a outlaw; you see.

I'll help all the people that's got nothing to do,
An if your poor an sick, maybe I'll help you.
I'll give money to every one that's poor,
Cause I can go an get plenty more.

I'll find out where all the millionars live,
An go right to them an make them give
About half of all the money they'v got,
An then take all the rest 'slike 's not.

But it'll be a long time fore I'm big as you,
An I might change my mind, cause some folks do,
Then maybe I wont be a outlaw chief;
Cause dad says a outlaw 's jest only a thief.

If I cant be a outlaw I wont care,
Maybe I'll jes be a millionare.

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